



THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

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NEW YORK, NY 10021

November 24, 1986

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

PRESIDENT

Dr. Michael A. Giannelli
Director
The National Coalition to Protect
Our Pets, Inc.
3123 Cahuenga Boulevard West
Los Angeles, California 90068

Dear Dr. Giannelli:

You have raised a number of policy and scientific questions which have been explored further, to some extent, since my column in 1966. I know you will not want to quote me out of context and I think I should carefully fill that in.

The first imperative is that medical research, including research involving the use of animals, if we are not to invoke enormous misery to our own species, be continued and encouraged. I would hope that we could find ways to mobilize biomedical investigators, together with organizations concerned about animal welfare, to a set of common principles and could help defend research against efforts to abolish it.

If we were conducting the debate at the level of ideal preferences, I think I would stand by the propositions in my 1966 article. I do admit that there are arguments in favor of the use of free ranging and highly cross-bred animals but I believe these could also be embraced by a ranch style of animal breeding for laboratory purposes. However, the proposal to forbid access to pound animals, at a time when there is no willingness to undertake the social and political costs of establishing the ranch breeding system, is just to frustrate biomedical research without providing an alternative, albeit potentially superior, solution. My order of preferences would be ranch breeding, then access to pound animals as an alternative even if possibly less desirable. I can see no merit at all to the destruction of pound animals when we do not have the ranches nor the funding to support them.

There may still be common ground along the lines that I indicated in my article. If we could get a consensus on the

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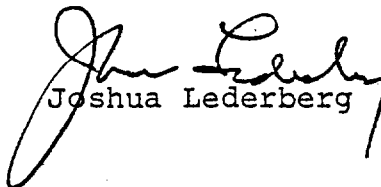
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essentiality of continuing animal research (with use of the most appropriate animal resources and, of course, regulated to guarantee against inhumane abuse) it would be a strong step forward.

For your convenience I enclose a possibly better photocopy of the article of August 1966.

I trust I need hardly remind you of the benefits to animal health that derive from research on animals as well.

Yours sincerely,


Joshua Lederberg

Encl. .S5

bcc: R. W. Nichols
D. Stark

see Animal Rights file documents